

Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAB-01 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 AGR-05 OPIC-03 AID-05

STR-04 TAR-01 ARAE-00 /091 W
----- 080884

P R 281900Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6587

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCSO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GUATEMALA 2185

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PN, GT

SUBJECT: TORRIJOS VISIT TO GUATEMALA

REF: (A) SAN JOSE 1671, (B) GUATEMALA A-064

1. AFTER 3 DAYS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DENIALS, GUATEMALA
ACKNOWLEDGED APRIL 27 THAT GENERAL TORRIJOS HAD BEEN IN
GUATEMALA APRIL 24.

2. GUATEMALA'S EMBARRASSMENT OVER THE TORRIJOS' REVELATIONS
IN SAN JOSE (REF A) WAS EVIDENT IN THE GOVERNMENT'S
"SPECIAL DECLARATION," WHICH STATED THAT "BOTH GOVERNMENTS
HAD AGREED THAT THE MATTERS DISCUSSED WERE TO HAVE BEEN
CONSIDERED OF A DIPLOMATIC NATURE AND THEREFORE CONFIDENTIAL."
THE DECLARATION ADDED THAT THE "GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA
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DEPLORES (THE FACT) THAT SOME OF THE MATTERS DEALT WITH

IN SAID INTERVIEW SHOULD HAVE BEEN PASSED ALONG TO THE INFORMATION MEDIA FROM PANAMA, IN THAT THIS ALTERS THE DIPLOMATIC TERMS IN WHICH THIS INTERVIEW WAS EFFECTED."

3. FOLLOWING THIS EXPRESSION OF IRRITATION, THE DECLARATION GOES INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CONVERSATIONS: TORRIJOS HAD FIRST THANKED GUATEMALA FOR DECLINING TO NOMINATE A CANDIDATE FOR THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AND FOR SUPPORTING PANAMA'S CANDIDATE.

4. TORRIJOS HAD THEN URGED GUATEMALA TO IMPOSE THE BANANA TAX. LAUGERUD REPONDED THAT HE PERSONALLY COULD NOT IMPOSE ANY TAX BECAUSE THAT POWER BELONGED TO THE CONGRESS. NEVERTHELESS, HE TOLD TORRIJOS THAT HE HAD GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS THAT THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF THE BANANA COMPANY CONTRACTS SHOULD BE STUDIED. THE GOVERNMENT'S PRESS RELEASE SAID NOTHING ABOUT LAUGERUD'S PURPORTED PROMISE (REFTEL A) TO RATIFY THE TREATY CREATING THE UNION OF BANANA EXPORTING COUNTRIES.

5. FINALLY, TORRIJOS ASKED FOR GUATEMALA'S SUPPORT IN THE CANAL NEGOTIATIONS. ACCORDING TO THE GOG COMMUNIQUE, LAUGERUD'S REPLY WAS THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD STRONGLY SUPPORT FORMULAS WHICH WOULD SATISFY "THE TWO NATIONS INVOLVED."

COMMENT: TORRIJOS' PRESSURE TACTICS MAY HAVE BEEN COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, COMPLICATING THE ALREADY DELICATE NATIONAL BANANA DEBATE (REF B). GOG POLICY ON THE ISSUE HAS NOT BEEN FULLY MAPPED OUT AND LAUGERUD WILL BE ANXIOUS TO AVOID ANY IMPLICATIONS THAT HE IS BEING RUSHED BY TORRIJOS. LAST WEEK AN MLN LEADER (CARLOS CIFUENTES DIAZ) CALLED FOR AN INVESTIGATION INTO WHETHER TORRIJOS HAD BRIBED THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS TO ENCOURAGE THEIR ADVOCACY OF THE BANANA TAX. END COMMENT.
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